

SMOKING — HARM REDUCTION

1221. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health:

I refer the minister to a recent paper published in the *Journal of Health Economics* that suggests that electronic nicotine delivery systems, like vapes, and the adoption of recreational cannabis laws are both associated with a reduction in adult cigarette smoking, and may indeed generate tobacco-related health benefits.

- (1) What are the latest available smoking figures for Western Australia and have they, as suggested in previous years, shown a slowdown in the number of Western Australian residents quitting tobacco?
- (2) Will the Department of Health consider this latest research when it next reviews its approach to tobacco harm reduction?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The prevalence of current smokers aged over 18 years in Western Australia in 2021 was 9.9 per cent. The prevalence of current Western Australian smokers aged over 18 years has declined from 21.8 per cent in 2002 to 10.4 per cent in 2020. The annual prevalence estimates of current smoking for WA adults aged over 18 years continues to decline.
- (2) The Department of Health considers and reviews evidence-based approaches to reduce the harm caused by tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke, aligned with the *Western Australian health promotion strategic framework 2022–2026* and the *Australian National tobacco strategy 2023–2030*.